

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,

I'm a citizen who wants to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, and I am frustrated and angry at the lack of informative and intelligent television coverage of government activities and proposals.

More than half of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story. Many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections. When there IS coverage, it is more often about style than substance.

Since broadcasters have clearly failed in their obligation to serve the public interest, the FCC should define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

It is a dying democracy that permits its citizens to make decisions based on 30-second ads, instead of in-depth examination of issues. You can change that by requiring citizen access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices facing us.

Sincerely,

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